1208

Woman's Malice,

A

NOVEL:

BEING A

True History

OF THE

Amours of an Eminent Person of Quality.

Exit in immensum fœcunda licentia Vatum,
Obligat historicâ nec sua verba fide.
Ovid.

LONDON,
Printed for *Joseph Wilde* at the *Elephant* at *Charing-Cross*. 1699.

1208. a. 20.

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TO THE Reader.

SInce a Preface to a Book is as much expected as a Prologue before a Play, or a Flouriſh at the drawing the Cur-

tain; to save your Longing, & to clear my self of the charge of an Unmannerly Singularity, which I fear, would have been brought against me, had I omitted it, I have in com-

compliance to cuſtom, reſum'd my Pen. I have obſerved the ſame Fate to attend Prefacing Authors (who ſeem to anſwer to an Indictment) and Pleading Criminals, accord-

cording to the difference in their Comportment and Behaviour; for as undaunted Boldneſs illuſtrates the juſtice of a good Cauſe, ſo obſtinate Impudence makes the guilty

guilty Malefactor, but more culpable. I therefore not daring to rely on any Merit, and not willing to impudently to Hector you into a good Opinion of the following Hiſtory,

ry, chooſe rather to plead guilty, and ſubmit to your Mercy, (which as being a young Offender (for this is the firſt Crime of this Nature) I hope to experience) having no-

nothing to say for my self, but that the Piece in your Hands is a true Story under a slight Veil, (for truth now rarely appears unmask'd) which they to whom 'tis known, can easily

easily see thro rough, and o thers, 'tis hop'd, without that particular satisfaction, will be so far contented, as to have no reason to complain. *Farewell.*

Wo-

Woman's Malice:

A

NOVEL.

IN the peaceful and flourishing Reign of *Charles* the Second, King of *Great Britain*, *France*, and *Ireland*, (whose Court was the Rendezvous of Noble Spirits, and for Gallantry and Magnificence outshined

thoſe of the moſt potent Governments of *Europe*, if not throughout the Univerſe) there was one, amongſt that Illuſtrious Company, whom we beg leave to call by the feign'd Name of *Rodalus* (whoſe Misfortunes are the Subject of the enſuing Hiſtory) deſcended of an Ancient and Noble Family, originally of another Nation, made famous by their Martial Valour and Conduct in the Courts of moſt Princes in *Europe*, and which carried no mean Hand in the then

then late Revolutions of State in *England.*

This *Rodulus* at his Father's deceaſe (at which time he was not above Twelve years of age) with the Dignity of a Marquiſate, was left Heir to a conſiderable, tho (in reſpect of his Quality) not over plentiful Eſtate, leſſened by his Father's having been embroiled in Law-Suits, but much more after his deceaſe, by the Knaviſh practices of thoſe to whoſe Tuition *Rodulus* was intruſted during his Nonage.

Great care had been taken by his Father, in his Life-time, for the good Education of this his only Son, in whom having perceived a wonderful pregnancy of Parts, and vehement inclinations to Learning and Knowledge, he procured for him the most able Tutors, (himself likewise giving him no small assistance) under whom he made great proficiency; and after his Father's death, (his love to Learning still increasing) the same care was gladly continued by his designing Guar-

dian

dians, who in the mean time while he laboured at the University, keeping him ignorant in his Affairs, studied no less, how to manage his Estate to their advantage, and his no small detriment.

At length taking upon himself the ordering of his Affairs, he resolved for Travel, and having made a Tour, through the most noted places of *Europe*, returning to *England* he setled at Court, where with the addition of an Honourable Post, to the now small re-

mainder of his Estate, he lived in great splendour and repute, his Courteous disposition making him belov'd by all that knew him.

Permit me now to give a brief Character of this Accomplish'd Person, and then expect a dismal Instance of the Vicissitude of Fortune, from which I will no longer detain you.

His Endowments both of Body and Mind were exquisite, being in Person tall, of a clean slender Shape, a loose, free, and genteel Air; an humble and courteous De-

Deportment, even to Inferiors, with ſo ſweet a Carriage, that he commanded Reſpect from all.

Of a ſtrong and healthy Conſtitution of Body, by reaſon of thoſe Manly Exerciſes he ſo often practiſed. Of a ſharp and quick Wit, a ſound and ſolid Judgment, ſubduing Paſſions, and ſubmitting to Reaſon.

In Dancing, Fencing, Vaulting, Riding, and all other genteel Accompliſhments he ſo excelled, that whoever ſaw him, doing any of them, could not but

think, that his whole Life-time had been employed in that very particular thing, which nevertheless he used but as Diversions and Recreations.

In this Prosperous Condition remained this happy Nobleman for some time, enjoying all the Goods of Nature and Fortune, in such an Estate, as who would not envy? Who would not desire? But this Grandeur, proved but the Harbinger of Misfortunes, and added to their weight. Fortune was willing to let him know,

he was not so high, as to be out of her reach, and to give him Experience of that truest Maxim, *Lubrica sunt fortunæ dona*; which she thus brought about.

There happened to be a most Magnificent Entertainment at *Whitehall*, at which *Rodalus* was present, and by his Activity and Graceful Deportment in Dancing had charmed the Fair Sex. One of these the little God had been more busie with, than with the rest; She Love-struck at first View could not with-

hold her Eyes, from the beloved *Rodalus*; but when he Danced the new-born Paſſion did ſo heave her Breaſts, and in her Cheeks and Eyes appeared ſo plain; that had not all the pleas'd Spectators Eyes, as in a common center, met in *Rodalus*, and by ſome hidden Spell, been fixed there, the forward Embryo muſt have been diſcovered. Her vigilant Eyes did watch his quicker Feet, her beating Heart kept time with every Step, and then a deep-fetch't Sigh would make the cloſe.

In

In ſhort, what e're he did, which (to give him his due) was to admiration, her Paſſion ſet a fairer gloſs on it, and ſhe could ſcarce believe, but that ſome God vouchſafed to appear on Earth in Humane Shape, to grace the Entertainment.

Rodalus was in the mean time feaſting his Eyes on a Beauteous Object, who was no leſs pleas'd than he, to obſerve, that ſhe alone in that Auguſt Aſſembly, could attract the Glances of ſo Accompliſh'd a Perſon, and one who wanted nothing to

make him appear amiable to the Delicate Sex. Tender Looks were so long interchanged, that Love ensued, which their meeting Eye-beams mutually declared; at which time the Lady with a modest blush, withdrawing her Eyes, would for a while deprive her self of that satisfaction, till she found them again insensibly fixed on that Object, when again she would snatch them off, and calling Reason to her assistance, would thus argue with her self.

It's

—Is't not—— or may it not be prejudicial to my Reputation—— may I not incur the World's Censure, if so soon I should entertain too kind thoughts of one altogether unknown—— 'tis true, his Air and Deportment speak him of Quality, equal if not superior to my self—— What then?—— shall I therefore indulge this Passion—— shall it be said that at first sight I lov'd—— and too perhaps another has his Heart—— his Eyes indeed proclaim 'tis mine——— but that perhaps is customary, and every She may thus pretend a claim—

claim— No, Tyrant Love— for now too plainly I perceive, 'tis you have rais'd this ſtorm within my troubled Breaſt, away— for here you'l find no entertainment— When on a ſudden an unthought of Look would daſh and baniſh ſuch ſevere Intentions, and the pleas'd God would ſuch ſoft thoughts inſpire, as quickly made the Victory compleat.

Rodalus to his infinite ſatisfaction had perceived this Conflict, and found, that Love had gain'd the conqueſt, but to know who that Fair One was, that had

rob'd

rob'd him of his quiet, he was at a great loſs; not daring to enquire, leſt his Companions miſtruſting the Matter, ſhould have made a diſcovery.

The Ball being broke up to both their unexpreſſible Sorrows, they were forc'd to part, and their Eyes bad the adieu; both being alike ignorant of each other; *Rodalus* being obliged in complaiſance to wait on ſome Ladies home, whom he had conducted thither, not being able at that time to learn any thing of her.

His

His Friends who could not but observe some alteration, imputed it to some discomposure, by reason of the heat of place, and he by his pretended illness sooner disengaged himself from their Society than otherwise he could have done, on pretence of taking some rest, though he dream't of nothing less.

Being got home, he flew with expedition to his Bed, for refuge from his anxious thoughts, but the dull God would not be prevail'd upon to close his Eyes, but

resigned

resigned him wholly to the mercy of his Mercilefs Paſſion, which my Reader's thoughts will better conceive, than my Pen can deſcribe, in which condition we will at preſent leave him.

I before told you of one that was deſperately in love with *Rodalus*, whoſe Paſſion, tho not the pureſt, is the moſt fierce of the Three, and will now give ſome further account of her.

She was a Woman (or rather a Compoſition of the Vices and Defects of that Sex) born of mean Pa-

Parents, but had so fair insinuated her self into the favour of a Doating Merchant in *London*, that he Married her, and in less than a year, stept out of the World to get rid of her; when she having her wicked Wits about her, suppress'd his genuine last Will, and produced another, which (with the assistance of one *Villanes*, a Fellow who had nothing to live on but his Wits, and a too intimate Friend of hers) she had forg'd, wherein her deceased Husband's

Estate,

Estate, and all his Effects, were bequeathed to her, and her self made sole Executrix, by which means she was reputed a rich Widow, and tho her late Husband's Friends suspected, and were partly assured of the cheat, yet not being able to prove it, it was hush't up, and her other Wickedness likewise, in which she was always very cautious and private, being Wrap't up in the never-failing Veil of Sanctity and Devotion *alias* Hypocrisie, were hid from the Eyes of the World, she thereby

thereby reaping the double advantage of enjoying hidden Pleasures, which are said to relish more sweetly, and of being secure from the perplexing thoughts of discovery, which imbitter those unlawful Sweets.

After this manner had she (whom we hereafter shall call by the name of *Dolosa*) past over her seeming Mourning-time for the Death of her Husband, when by the means of her aforesaid Friend *Villanes* she was admitted to that fatal Ball. As for her Person 'twas

'twas very ordinary and in different, and her Character can best be given in the Negative, which I will not here particularize, nor trouble my Reader any further about it, than as it occasionally occurs in the ensuing History.

As she was always very violent, and precipitate in her Passions, so no less at this time, for having learn't who it was that had so strongly engaged her Affections, (not in the least endeavouring to bridle, but yielding and giving way to her

her Passion) her only concern was how to work upon *Rodalus*, so as to get him for her Husband, (which she was so vain as to imagine, having her self the repute of a Person vastly rich, and having been informed that his Estate was but small) *Villanes* was employed in this weighty Affair, with a Promise of great Matters if the March succeeded, which he undertaking, was by his Agents soon given to understand, how averse *Rodalus* was to Marriage, and that there were

were no hopes that such a thing could ever be effected.

Doloſa in the mean time dream't of nothing leſs than a Ladiſhip, and that her beloved Lord was every night in her Arms, the very thoughts whereof had so augmented her Pride, which was exceſſive before, that now every one was at a loſs in what terms to expreſs themſelves to her, and none without a long Attendance was admitted into her preſence, and then ſhe was so altered by the awkward affectation of Majeſty, or a big

Look,

Look, that none could approach her without blushing at her ridiculous Behaviour, and when her Visitants (left Laughter should betray their Sentiments) after a very short stay would take their leave, her Pride (I was about to say) miscall'd it Respect, but such 'twas indeed, for therein, I think, they paid her some Respect, that they would not make her their Laughing-stock. But when *Villanes* brought her the unwelcome News of the disappointment of her Tow'ring Hopes, all

her

her Passions at once like a Torrent, burst in upon her, Love, Anger, Hatred, Revenge, Jealousie, &c. all broke loose, and join'd to torment her.

In this Distraction leaving *Villanes*, she hastned to her Chamber, and shutting the Door, threw her fermented Corps upon the Bed, where she lay tumbling and tossing for some time, with all these Furies combating one against another, till Love, at length carried the day, and bore away the Victory from them all, and

she came to this Resolution, that come what would, at the expence of Reputation, Estate, or whatever else was dear to her, she would enjoy her Love.

Having thus resolved, she sets her empty Brains at work, to accomplish this design, but finding the shallowness of her own Invention, she perceived that a Confident would be very necessary, both to invent the Means, and to assist her in the Execution; and after some consideration, concluded there was none fitter for

for such a purpose than *Villanes*, to whom she resolved to open her Heart, and to desire his assistance therein.

With this intention she returns to the Room where she had left him, but not finding him there, going to the Window, she spy'd him in a retired Walk in the Garden Pensive and Melancholy, whither she followed him, and coming up to him;

What! (said she) *musing my* Villanes? at which starting, for he had not heard her coming; *Only sympa-*

thizing with you, Madam, (replied he) *for the loss of your Ladyship.*

Cease your Bantering, my Villanes, (answered she) when from her Bosom she presented him with some Guinea's, which she knew he wanted; *and* (continued she) *compose your self, I need your best Advice, in a matter of importance, whereby you may know the confidence I repose in you.*

You have hitherto, Madam, (said he) *found me trusty, and I hope by my future Services, to continue your favourable Opinion of me.*

Enough (said she) *my* Villanes, *may your Observances continue, till you find me ungrateful; but to the Business.*

You cannot, my Villanes, *but remember the Ball, that happy yet unhappy night; then, there,* Villanes, *first these Eyes beheld that* Rodalus, *that something more than Man, for whom in pleasing pain, my Soul doth burn, in whose lov'd Arms I long to quench the flame. Did not you see,* Villanes, *how he Danc'd, observe his Mien, his Shape, his every Motion, his Graceful Carriage, and his sweet Behaviour;*

and did'st not envy those bewitching Charms, wherewith he secretly insnared our Hearts, and dy'd the Cheeks of every sickly Girl in deepest red, such pow'r was in a Look, that it could thaw their frozen Arteries, and lend new heat to near consumed Nature. This, this is he, Villanes, whom I love, and whom what e're comes on't, I must enjoy. Assist me dear Villanes, call to mind my former Favours, let them spur you on, and for Reward, if this you bring about, ask what you will, there's nought shall be deny'd.

Villanes

Villanes had with abundance of attention and patience, liſtned to her Diſcourſe, and now tired as well as aſtoniſhed, with what he heard, (diſguiſing his Reſentment) he told her, he fear'd 'twould prove a difficult task, but that diligence ſhould not be wanting on his ſide, to the accompliſhment of it; and leſt ſhe ſhould again have tormented him, he for that time took his leave, telling her, he would conſult how it might be effected, with the greateſt ſpeed and pri-

vacy, and that to morrow he would again wait on her, with an account of his Proceedings.

Thus they parted, she overjoyed at the encouragement he had given her, and he studying how to make this surprizing Business advantageous to himself.

He was not a little concerned, to find that she, who he thought, had as passionately lov'd him, as she now appeared to admire *Rodalus*, could have the impudence to imploy him of all

all Men in such an Affair. But Advantage being what he aimed at in his Dealings with her, and having a prospect of no small Benefit that might accrew to him, by the Skilful Management of this Affair, he endeavoured rather to appear what she desired to have him, then what she might have expected him to be, at the breaking off the Business, curbing his Passion to serve his Interest, and though he was grievously incensed at the Injury, he imagined she did to him, yet he past it

over with a ſhew of Obedience, having found, that thereby he ſhould gain the opportunity of a ſufficient Revenge, which he inwardly vowed to execute.

Deeply ingaged in ſuch like Thoughts, he was by this time come near to his Lodgings, and was accidentally met by an Acquaintance, who had been there to enquire for him, and whom *Villanes* had paſt by; but that he ſtopt him, demanding why he was ſo thoughtful, *Villanes* told him, he was ſomewhat indiſpoſed,

diſpoſed, and after exchanging a few Words more, they agreed to take a refreſhing Glaſs.

Being ſat, and after ſome other Diſcourſe, and a few Healths had paſt, *Villanes* having throughly weighed the Matter within himſelf, conſidering this Friend of his to be a very proper Perſon, and one that had not been unacquainted with Intreagues, reſolves to make uſe of him, in order to which he thus broke his Mind to him.

Our

Our lucky meeting Feradine, (for that was his Name) *this evening seems to me to have been contrived by Providence, for the effecting a design which will not only tend to your satisfaction but advantage, and wherein a Woman, and no mean one, is concerned*——— Here he made a stop.

Go on (said he) *Villanes* ——(thinking he had waited for his approbation)—— *take consent for granted when a Woman is in the Case.*

Hold, Ferradine, (answered he) *not so fast, there are Preliminaries first to be agreed upon,*

upon, before the main business be revealed. You must first sincerely promise, not to attempt any further discovery of the Lady, than only what I shall disclose to you, and diligently to observe such Injunctions as shall be laid on you; and for Reward, you shall not only have a nights Enjoyment of a Lady, not contemptible either for Beauty or Quality, (with which alone perhaps you'd be contented) but Ten Guinea's shall be paid you on demand.

You surprize me Villanca (replied he) and as for what you

you require of me, I faithfully promise it shall punctually be performed; But, pray, to put me a little out of doubt, inform me so far as you think fit of this Mystical Matter.

Believe me, Ferradine, (replied he) *before I proceed farther, you'r the only Man with whom I'd lodge so important a Secret, and to evidence the Trust I repose in you, and the Esteem I have for you; thus it is.*

The Lady I mentioned to you is Love-sick, and in a longing condition for a certain Lord, whom (knowing no o-

ther-

therwise than by Eyesight) it will be no difficult matter for you to personate: I'll so contrive it, that for preventing discovery you shall go to Bed in the dark, and will inform her, that 'twas for her sake, I designed it so; That my Lord before admittance is to engage his Honour, that he will move before day-break, and enquire no further after her, than it is her pleasure to discover of her self. This, Ferradine, is to be your Task, in which I question not, but you'll behave your self Honourably, and come off with

Credit,

Credit, both in the Ladies Opinion and mine. I am to morrow morning to acquaint her how Matters ſtand; the night, if you pleaſe, ſhall be the time of action; being loath to defer your Happineſs longer, for both I know will be impatient: in the mean time it ſhall be my care to provide private Lodgings for the Intreague, and when you are once together, I'll leave you to manage her, and for my part, I ask nothing in return but the performance of your Promiſe.

May

May impotence ſeize me (ſaid *Ferradine*) *when firſt I entertain a thought, that may be prejudicial to my* Villanes. *My beſt of Friends let me embrace thee, and for this Favour, if there be ought, even to Life or Fortune, wherein* Ferradine *can ſerve thee, command and try how freely I'll obey.*

Thanks, Ferradine, (ſaid Villanes) *I aſſure my ſelf of thy Friendſhip, and when occaſion requires, ſhall not fail to take you at your Word, but of this no more, our Buſineſs requires diſpatch; To mor-*

row

row at One we'll meet and Dine at the Globe, where you shall be satisfied in Particulars; When calling the Drawer, they discharged the Reckoning, and parted.

Ferradine was so pleased at the Adventure, that he rested but little that night, for thinking how little rest he was to have the next, and longed for Noon, when he was to meet *Killanes*, and take his last Instructions.

Dolosa likewise it is to be presumed, enjoyed no great quiet, for weary of the Bed, she rose very early in expecta-

pectation of *Villanes*, who came about Ten in the morning, when recounting the Particulars of his Honourable Negotiation, and giving her to understand, that he had already compleated her Happiness, he presented her with a forg'd Letter to this effect.

MADAM,

I'M sorry 'tis denied me to know to whom I'm obliged for a Favour so extraordinary, but being your Pleasure, I presume not to enquire. I shall not fail to meet you ac-

cord-

cording to appointment, and if my Word and Honour may be thought a sufficient Security, for the performance of your Commands, you have them.

RODALUS.

At the Receipt of this this Letter, her Joy was inexpressible, and *Villanes* had enough to do, to make her contain her self so long, as to acquaint her how Matters were ordered; but by fits, he satisfied her, that he had provided a Lodging, as for a Country Gentleman,

man, and his Lady, for one Night, at an Acquaintance's House of his, near *St. James's*, and that his Lordship, had already been informed, by a private Messenger, how every thing was to be Managed; that he had provided a Female Confident, and for her Lesson had taught her, that his Lordship is not to be admitted into the Chamber, till the Lights be out; and that she must give him notice when he is to depart, and whatever else would be necessary. So that there would

would be nothing remaining for her to do, but to be in Bed by Ten, at which time his Lordship had promised to be there.

Having made an end of his Discourse, *Dolosa* (being somewhat recovered from that Extacy into which this delightful News had transported her) fetching from her Cabinet a rich Jewel, with a few Guinea's for Pocket-Money. *Here, dear Villanes,* (said she, presenting them to him) *take the Reward due to thy faithful Services, Words are too strait*

to

to expreſs the ſenſe of this Kindneſs, thou haſt hereby obliged me for ever, all I'm worth can never ſatisfie this Debt.

Your Bounteous Liberality, Madam, (return'd he) obliges me to the performance of your Commands, though never ſo harſh and unpleaſing, as the preſent Affair may inſtance, which none but one like me, ſenſible of the many Obligations, whereby you have for ever link'd me to your ſervice, would with this diligence have effected, which may convince you that gratitude is not

want-

wanting, but the Means and Occasions of returning your Favours.

You have in this one Act (replied she) *my* Villanes, *more than recompenced my slight Kindnesses, and have so far excelled me in Gratitude, that it makes me ashamed, when I consider, that I have contracted Obligations I shall never be able to discharge. You need not therefore, dear* Villanes, *to fear that this Occasion will lessen my Esteem for you, but assure your self, that hereby you're become far dearer than ever.*

With

With such like Discourse had they past away the time, till *Villanes*, thinking his Friend *Ferradine* would expect him, was about taking leave, when she entreated him to stay and Dine with her, and to help her to pass away the tedious hours till night; which he had been obliged to, had he not told her, that something relating to her Concern was omitted, which was necessary to be done, when she freely dismist him, and betook her self to the retired enjoyment of her pleased thoughts.

Villanes from thence haſtned to his uneaſie Friend *Ferradine*, who was no leſs pleaſed than ſhe when he beheld in *Villanes*'s Countenance the ſigns of Joy, when welcoming him with a Brimmer to his thoughts; he began to enquire how Matters ſtood.

Villanes hereupon ſatisfied him that every thing exceeded his Wiſh, and had ſucceeded beyond diſappointment? 'Twould be too tedious to recount all the Diſcourſe that paſt between them, and to deſcribe

ſcribe the Raptures of tranſported *Ferradine*, let it ſuffice, that *Villanes* informed him of all that was further neceſſary to be known, and put in practice, and that *Ferradine* made reiterated Vows of perpetual Secreſie and Fidelity.

After Dinner *Ferradine* taking leave of *Villanes*, haſtens home to his Lodging, to take that Repoſe he had wanted the night before, and to prepare himſelf for the approaching night's Encounter.

Doloſa likewiſe remains very uneaſie, her Joy ap-

pears visible to all that see her, being too ravishing to be concealed, and is admired at by all that perceive it, who employ themselves to little purpose in searching out the cause. A short Dinner serv'd her, which being over, she again retired her self, framing more charming *Ideas* of her lov'd *Rodalus* than ever, revolving a thousand things in her restless Mind, imagining him in every posture, running over all the Circumstances of the Ball, and blessing the propitious Heavens

vens for presenting that *Lovely Object* to her Eyes; then thinking to deceive the tedious minutes, she tried to sleep, but 'twas in vain.

In short, the desired hour at length approached, and none of them were backward, but according to their several Instructions, all play'd their parts to a miracle; *Ferradine* the Counterfeit Lord, took possession of his unknown Mistress, and their long expected Happiness was consummated.

In the morning notice being given to *Ferradine*, that now, according to Capitulation, he was to raise the Siege, the news was alike grievous to them both; but when he remembred that he played the Counterfeit, and weighed the danger of an unavoidable discovery, which must have ensued had he but stay'd till day-light, which already began to peep, and likewise calling to mind his Engagement to *Villanes*, taking leave, he withdrew into the next Room, where,

he dreſt himſelf, and departed without any particular enquiry after the *Lady*, which he perceived, ſhe would have been willing enough with little urging, to have reſolved him in; and *Doloſa* after having in a delightful Dream, repeated the pleaſures of the night, likewiſe thought it time to riſe, when being Dreſs'd, home ſhe drove extreamly pleaſed at the ſucceſs of the Adventure, and highly valuing *Villanes* for his dexterous Management.

Rodalus, all this while was ignorant of these Contrivances, having his thoughts otherwise employed, not having yet found out the Object of his continual Meditations, so that a sensible Change was observed by all that knew him; his brisk sprightly Humour being altered to a reserved Thoughtfulness, his usual Recreations and Diversions totally laid aside, unless he was by his Companions (as it were) compelled to it, and then performed with such negligence and indifference,

ference, as evidenced the little satisfaction he received thereby, being wholly devoted to Solitude and Retirement.

After this melancholy manner did he spend his time, till one evening he was by some Noblemen prevailed upon, to go to see a new famous *Opera*, whither he went more to oblige them, than with a design to recreate himself; where having sate a while, a dazling Lustre seem'd to glance upon his Face: when directing his Eyes to the

the place, whence her thought it proceeded, they were encountred by those of his adored unknown charming *Mistress*; whom *Rodalus* perceiving in a kind of Extacy, blest his propitious Stars, for having given him another view of her, resolving not to let slip that Opportunity, but on any terms to endeavour now to yield himself that satisfaction, the neglect whereof had already caused him so much disquiet, especially being animated thereto by her kind and cour-

courteous Looks, which seem'd to give him invitation, and in their pretty manner of Discourse to inform him, that he had already gained admission to her Heart.

Rodalus hereupon taking courage, upon enquiry found her to be the Lady *Selinda*, only Daughter to the Noble Lord *Lemwindor*, one of the *King's* chief Favourites, and a great Man in his Court.

You may imagine him not a little pleased at the discovery, though having

for

for the moſt part from his Infancy, for his Education ſake, been abſent from the Court, and not having been long returned from Travel, he had not contracted a familiarity with the Lord *Limmindor*, yet conſidering the intimacy that had been between that Noble Lord and his Father, he could not but conceive ſome hopes.

He now began to think himſelf Fortune's Darling Favourite, and blam'd himſelf, for having accuſed her, and every day gave him

him new Occasions of expressing his Gratitude to that flattering Goddess.

Not long after there was a Horse Match run at *Newmarket*, where 'twas *Rodalus*'s Fortune to loose Two or Three hundred Guinea's to the Lord *Lemmindor*, which he did not repine at, when he considered he had thereby obtained a place in his Lordships Esteem, who no sooner understood who he was, but he coveted his Acquaintance, entertaining him for his Father's sake with all the Marks of Respect

ſpect and Good-will imaginable.

From this time there aroſe no ſmall Familiarity between them, by which means it was not long e're he gained the opportunity of a private Conference with his Charming Miſtreſs, when laying hold on the firſt occaſion, he with his uſual taking Air thus accoſted her.

Madam, (ſaid he) *the wonderful Perfections indulgent Nature hath ſo plentifully beſtowed on you, make you deſervedly an Object of*

Ad-

Admiration to our whole Sex; which gives me a jealouſie, that my Addreſs, however ſincere and real, may (like that of others) be miſconſtrued to proceed from Complaiſance, and Cuſtom. I confeſs, Madam, (continued he) *'tis what's too common, but your Ladiſhips Charms are ſuch as never cauſe feigned Flames, or wound by halves. Accept then, dear Madam, an Heart over which you have gained an abſolute Conqueſt, and may I no longer breath, than while you find me intirely devoted to your ſervice.*

My

My Lord, (replied she) *I cannot think you guilty of so mean a thing as flattery, and therefore should be injurious to my self, as well as ungrateful to your Lordship, should I not give you cause to hope*——

When to hide her blushes she modestly withdrew, e're he could return an Answer; leaving *Rodalus* astonished at her so kind Reply.

Scarce could he believe his Ears (so ravished was he) and for a while, could not be perswaded, but that his over-credulous Fancy had been deluded, till re-

col-

collecting himself, he at length came to a belief, that what he had heard and seen was real and no Vision.

Finding himself thus fortunate, he resolved in the next place to sollicite her Father's Consent, in which he likewise proved no less successful; so that now he made open Court to her, and became the envy of the Courtly Youth, of whom not a few languish'd for his Beauteous Mistress. In this prosperous condition let us a while leave these Billing Lovers, and enquire a little after *Dolosa*. *Vil-*

Villanes fearing left too much ſubjection and ſubmiſſion to her Humours, might make her more bold with him, ſince he found her advanced to a great pitch of Arrogance, and not having yet digeſted the Affront ſhe put upon him, in employing him in ſo baſe a Negotiation, reſolved now to get even with her, in order to which he began to take more upon him, and carry an higher hand over her than uſually, which he effected by putting her in mind of

thoſe

those Services, which her Pride had near caused her to forget, letting her know how much he resented (above all her other Commands) her impudence, in putting him on so base an Action, as that of the Intreague with *Rodalus*, not forgetting to acquaint her, that it lay in his power to strip her of all she enjoyed, and much more to the same purpose.

This Discourse at the first put her into a passion, till *Killanes* assured her, that her Haughtiness and Choler

her would stand her in no stead, and fetch'd her down by informing her, that since her Ingratitude would not give her leave to confess, that through this means he had been raised to that Grandeur, he would by a full and open Confession of their Contedelate Devices discover the Cheat, and give her occasion too late to repent of her Perverseness.

By these means she became more pliable, and he taking that advantage, daily exercised more and more

Ty-

Tyranny over her, so that it was to be questioned whether her self, or *Villanes* had most command over what she had. How pleasing this might be to one of her Insolent Temper, I leave my Reader to judge.

Things were in this posture, when *Dolesa* receiv'd the unwelcome News of *Rodalus*'s Pretension to *Selinda*. You may conceive, 'twas no small grief to her, that the Domineering Tyranny of *Villanes* had restrained her from the further enjoyment of her

Loose

Looſe Deſires; but when ſhe conſidered the happineſs of her Rival, that ſhe was every day bleſt with *Rodalus*'s Charming Converſation, and the tendereſt Expreſſions of his Paſſion, and waiting for the Conſummation of their long wiſht-for mutual ſatisfaction; This ſo enraged her, that day or night ſhe enjoyed no quiet, till ſhe had invented the Means to check their Proſperity.

Now more than ever the *Woman* appeared, Pride, Revenge and Malice were ſummon-

moned to assist her in this Hellish Enterprize, and not daring to make *Villanes* acquainted with her Mischievous Intentions, she, from her own Magazine of prodigious Villany, formed the following Stratagem.

She had by some means or other discovered, that the Lord *Allesant*, a young hot-brain'd Debauch'd Nobleman, had formerly entertained a Passion for *Selinda*, but not being approved by her Father the Lord *Lemmindor*, was forced to give over his Pretences.

This

This Lord *Allefant* she found had taken a prejudice to *Rodalus*, for his having had better success with *Selinda* than himself, and not doubting but the least Occasion, would be a sufficient Pretence for Revenge, after some Meditation her Malicious Invention furnish'd her with an Epistle to him in these Terms.

My Lord,

I *Know not whom better to Address my self unto than to*

to your Lordship, who (as a Man of Honour) are obliged to right an injured defenceless Woman. The Perfured Lord Rodalus, *after a Thousand Vows and Protestations of everlasting Affection, and after having betrayed my Weakness to the loss of Honour, (dearer than Life, tho not than* Rodalus) *hath basely left me in a condition unable long to survive it, for the Lady* Selinda, *your former Mistress. My humble Request therefore to your Lordship is, That you would contrive some Means to pre-*

vent the unavoidable Misery of that Lady, which must be the Consequence of their Marriage; whereby you may likewise serve your self, if your Passion be not extinguished, as well as that deserving Lady, and

Your Lordship's

Unknown most humble

Suppliant.

Having perused this Spiteful Production of her Brains, after Sealing and Superscribing,

ſcribing, away ſhe ſends it to be left for the Lord *Alleſant*; preparing at the ſame time, more of theſe Paper-kites to be ſent flying with the like forged Intelligence, in caſe the former ſucceeded according to her Malignant Deſires; which ſhe the next day found to exceed her Wiſhes; For *Alleſant* had no ſooner read her Letter, but inflamed with Choler, (not conſidering how true the Contents were, or from whom that Letter came) his Paſſion, diſguiſed in the Cloak

of Honour, and what not, dictated to him this Challenge, which by his Page he immediately dispatch'd to *Rodalus*.

My LORD,

IT will not be difficult for you to guess the cause of my desiring you to meet me single at the Swords Point to Morrow morning at Five precisely in St. James's *Park, at the Gate fronting* Hyde-Park, *where I question not, but you'll receive the Reward of your Perfidiousness.*

ALLESANT.

Rodalus as it happened was newly come home, when the Page arrived, who presented him with this Letter; which having read, it did not a little surprize him, being altogether ignorant of the Occasion, and innocent of the Crime therein laid to his Charge, nevertheless turning to the Messenger, he bad him acquaint his Master, that he should not fail to meet him at the time and place appointed.

In short, they both had little rest that night, *Alle-*

sant thirsting for the Blood of *Rodalus*, and he being on the rack to know his meaning; so that there was no occasion for their being waked in the morning.

Both like Men of Honour were punctual to the Hour, and 'twas *Rodalus*'s fortune to come first to the place, where he had not long expected *Allesant*, 'ere he spied him nimbly approaching, his Fury adding Wings to his Feet; who being come nearer, was received by *Rodalus* with a civil demand of the Occa-

sion of that Dispute, he professing himself ignorant of any Affront knowingly offered, either to him, or any other whose Quarrel he might espouse, desiring to be further informed, before his Rashness might cause the Death of one of them.

Alleſant hereupon pulling out of his Pocket the aforesaid Letter of *Doloſa's*, and throwing it on the Ground between them, told him, that therein was contained the Cause, whereof he should still remain ig-

norant, unless Fortune should decide the Controversie in his favour; and thereupon drawing, *Rodalus* was obliged to do the same, and a sharp Encounter ensued.

Both were good Swordsmen, and each had met with his Match, so that for a while, 'twas dubious to which of them Victory inclined; but, after some slight Wounds interchanged, *Alfesar* being caught on a feint, was run quite through the Body, falling down dead immediately.

Rodalus

Rodalus thereupon snatching up the dear-bought Epistle, retired for his security to a Friends House in *Westminster*, immediately causing a Surgeon to be dispatch'd to *Allesant*, but his Charity proved unseasonable, for he was found Breathless, his own Wounds being dress't, and bound up by a Skilful Surgeon, no great danger was apprehended from them, not being Mortal.

He now pluckt out the fatal Epistle, upon reading whereof, he was more a-

mazed than ever, and found himself involv'd in a Labyrinth of perplexing doubts, being thereby (instead of reaping his desired satisfaction) but still the more confounded; when finding his Enquiry to be but in vain, and to yield him nothing but more disquiet, he resolved (as much as in him lay) to surcease further Searches, and to wait, until time and patience would unriddle the Mystery.

The Report of this Duel was soon spread through the

the Town, and 'twas not long e're *Dolosa* (to her infinite satisfaction) received the news, not in the least regarding (right Woman!) the untimely Death of the Rash and Unfortunate *Allefant*, since thereby she had attained her ends, in hindring *Rodalus* from tendering his wonted Services to *Selinda*, which for ever to prevent, she resolved to stick at nothing, that might be a Means of keeping him from obtaining his Pardon; which being once granted, she had reason to fear, that

two all

all her designs afterwards might prove frustrate and ineffectual.

In order whereunto, she so contrived it, and such was her success therein (Oh! the vicissitude of Fortune) that knowing him not capable of vindicating himself, she not only by her insinuating Practices, inconsed the Relations of the Lord *Allesant* (who were of great Esteem, and had the Kings Ear) against him, but by her Devilish Craft and Subtlety (so Fate would have it) drew his own

own Friends into a belief of the truth of such false and forged Accusations, that they growing cold, and negligent in their intercession to the King for him, and so great opposition being made by the others, his Life was despaired of, and 'twas thought, that when he should be apprehended, he would be no better than a dead Man.

Rodalus in this unhappy condition, lying under the frowns of Fortune, abandon'd by his Friends, persecuted by his Enemies, and

(which

(which he thought worſt of all) the Love of his dear *Selinda* (for whom he ſtill retained an unfeigned Paſſion, being ecclips'd by reaſon of the interpoſition of the Crimes charged on him) placing his whole Comfort in his Innocence, with an undaunted Courage ſtood this violent Shock of Fortune, and having already experienced ſome Changes from that wavering Goddeſs, ſtill hop'd for better ſucceſs, reſigning himſelf to the Will of Providence, ſince he had

had found, that all he could do, prevailed but little with his pretended Friends; by this means bringing Fortune over to him, she being said ever to assist the Bold and Daring. Which by an unexpected turn thus happened.

The Success *Dolosa* had found in this Affair, had so puft her up, that now thinking nothing too arduous and difficult to be accomplisht, she began to think of rejecting *Villanes*, and slighted him every day more and more, which he per-

perceiving, and having heard what Misfortunes had befallen *Rodalus*, he thence suspected her to have had an hand in that Inhumane Treachery, which occasioned him to watch her more narrowly, whereby in a little time he found his suspicions but too true, by the Copies of some of the Letters she had dispersed abroad, which (having privately obtained the Key) he had discovered in her Cabinet, where he likewise found several other Things, which were in no wise pleasing to him. *Vil-*

Villanes hereat incenſed, (it being natural to ſome to abominate thoſe things in others (eſpecially where a prejudice is conceived) which in themſelves they excuſe and indulge) pocketing what he found, could not ſo ſtrictly contain his Reſentments, but, his new conceived Indignation appeared too plainly in his fiery Countenance, not to be perceived by *Doloſa*, who was not a little concerned, when ſhe miſt thoſe Papers, and remembring that *Villanes* went out in a Paſſion,

and

and fearing what might be the effect thereof, she thought it highly necessary to study some way to secure her self from his Revenge; which she thought might (this be best effected.

She had by reason of *Killane*'s Usurpation lately contracted an Acquaintance with one *Sendaris*, who had extravagantly spent his Fortune, and whom (by reason of his indigence) by her Presents and Favours, she had made her Creature; him therefore she immediately

ately

ately ſends for, and being come, tells him a long forged Narration of *Villanes's* inſupportable Cruelty and Tyranny, further acquainting him, that to be rid of his Inſolencies for the future, ſhe reſolved that night to pack up her ready Money and Jewels, and to leave her Houſe, deſigning with the firſt opportunity to depart the Kingdom; adding, that ſhe had made choice of him, above all others, to partake of her good or bad Fortune.

Sen-

Senaris extreamly pleased at the Motion, gave her to understand, that her Commands had an absolute sway over him, and that with the hazard of his Life, he was always ready to serve her.

Here *Dolosa* (who had now no time to throw away upon Compliments) stopt him, telling him, that since they were so happily agreed, 'twas convenient, to study how they might get off, with most privacy, and after some Consultation, 'twas concluded, that

Sen-

Sendaris should procure for *Dolosa* a Suit of Man's Apparel, and change his own Habit, and should provide Lodgings in an Inn for that night, having Horses in a readiness against Four the next morning, which she thought would be the least suspicious way of Travelling, being resolved rather to straddle, than run the risque of a discovery. It was her task in the meantime to prepare her Baggage, with which she was to slip out to *Sendaris* about Eleven.

All

All this was punctually performed, and having doz'd out the night, up they got about Three to prepare for their further flight, which being dreſt, and Mounting, away they Gallopt, towards *Graveſend*, where about Eight they arrived.

Having a while Refreſhed themſelves, they upon enquiry heard of a Veſſel bound for *Holland*, which waited only for a Wind, when reſolving to take that opportunity, they agreed with the Maſter for their

their Freight, and next morning, the Wind being fair, they set sail, where we'll leave them on their Voyage, not a little satisfied to be got so far out of danger. But to return to *Villanes.*

No sooner had he discovered this Treachery, but he made it his Business to search out some of *Rodalus's* most intimate Friends, to whom he discovered what he thought fit concerning that Matter, giving them sufficient Testimony, that it was in

his

his power to save *Rodalus*'s Life, and faithfully promised to accomplish it, if they would but admit him to his presence, being acquainted with some further Secrets, which he said he would not reveal to any other but himself; and was dismist with a Promise, that his Lordship should be informed of what he had declared to them, and that the next day he should receive a positive answer.

In short, *Rodalus* overjoyed at the Message, and being in some hopes, that

the

the whole Myſtery would be unriddled, gave Orders, that at any time he ſhould have free acceſs to him.

Villanes was not negligent, but having received this Anſwer, his next Walk was to *Rodalus*, whom he certified of the whole truth, laying open *Doloſa's* Wickedneſs and Cruelty, and aſſuring his Lordſhip, that himſelf was wholly ignorant of that Matchleſs Villany, till the day before, when he had diſcovered it, by the Copies of thoſe Letters, which he produced

as a proof of what he had told him, amongſt which was found the Copy of that Letter, word for word, which ſhe wrote to the Lord *Allefant*, which *Rodalus* comparing with his, found them in all points to agree, and that both were written by the ſame Hand.

Rodalus here could not forbear reflecting on the miſerable Effects of *Allefant*'s unadviſedneſs, which had coſt them ſo dear, and to ſhew his Gratitude to *Villages*, preſented him with

a

a Ring from his Finger, he in return making a thousand protestations of fidelity to his Lordship, in case he would do him the Honour to entrust him in his Concerns, which *Rodalus* hearkning unto, requested of him, this only favour; That he would certifie the Lord *Lemmindor*, and some few more, whom he named to him, in the truth of this concern, which he sincerely promised, and having taken leave, as faithfully performed.

It is impossible to conceive the surprize *Villanes* was in, when by a Friend, he was informed of *Dolosa's* flight, which till now he was ignorant of, and could scarce believe, till going to her House, he was certified of the truth of what he least desired to be true.

This being become publick, the Scene suddenly changed, for now even the Friends of the Deceased Lord *Allesant*, weighing the Circumstances of the Business, ceased their vehement

hement prosecution of *Rodalus*, and were moved to compassionate his Innocence, and his Friends, especially the Lord *Lemnander*, became more importunate to the King for his Life, which without much difficulty was granted. So that in a short time, having received his Pardon, he was again taken into favour, being caressed by the chief Men in the Kingdom, who went to accompany him from the place of his Retirement to Court, where he was re-

ceived and welcomed with all Tokens of Joy.

His first Visit was to his Adored *Selinda*, his so long absence from her having been his greatest Affliction.

It will be needless to tell you how he was received by her, (the most tender and loving, as well as most lovely of her Sex) who, though she had so far the command of her self, as not to express a Passion for him, after having heard what Accusations were brought against him, yet find-

finding him unjustly accused, and honourably acquitted, nothing was wanting in his Reception, that might evidence the greatest delight and satisfaction, that Love could inspire her with; and to make their Joy more full, the Lord *Lemmindor* entring, made him a second offer of his beloved *Selinda*, telling him, that to morrow (if 'twere his pleasure) the Ceremony should be performed; With what thankfulness this News was received by the Two Lovers

I leave you to judge, not being willing to lose my self in transports, since I'm now drawing to a Close.

In fine, the next morning the Nuptials were solemnized, and nothing was wanting to make that day less tedious to the Married Couple. Night came at length, when *Rodalus* buried the remembrance of his Afflictions in Transports, and thought himself richly rewarded for all his Troubles.

Many happy years they lived together, their Loves

encreasing with their Lives, enjoying for the most part annually such Blessings, as growing up, proved great Comforts to their Parents and Relations.

Sendaris about this time, in a tattered condition, brought to Town the news of *Dolosa*'s being made Fishes Meat, for though being embarked, she thought her self secure from *Villane*'s Revenge, yet was she not out of the reach of Providence, for a Storm arising, the Ship wherein she was, ran aground,

ground, and she with some others, who could not save themselves by Swimming, was swallowed up by the Tempestuous Sea.

Villanes was by *Rodalus* rewarded with a considerable Employment, whereby (reforming his Manners) he afterwards lived credibly, and in good repute, until his death.

F I N I S.